

The Flood



SABBATH—APRIL 16

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Genesis 6:13–Genesis 7:10; 2 Peter 2:5–9; Genesis 8:1; Psalm 106:4.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘Remember how it was in the days of Noah. It will be the same when the Son of Man comes’ ” (Matthew 24:37, NlrV).



“The LORD saw that the people on the earth were very evil. He saw that they thought only about evil things all the time” (Genesis 6:5, ERV).

“**THE LORD SAW** that the people on the earth were very evil. He saw that they thought only about evil things all the time” (Genesis 6:5, ERV). The verb “saw” reminds us that the Lord made the earth in six days. After each day, the Lord “saw” that everything He made was “**tov**.” “**Tov**” is the Hebrew word for “good.” But what does God see now in Genesis 6? God sees only “**ra**,” or evil (Genesis 6:5). God is “sorry” that He made humans because they are filled only with “**ra**” (Genesis 6:5, 6).

Yes, God is sorry. But He also wants to save humans. The Hebrew word for “sorry” in Genesis 6:6 is “**nakhm**.” This word shows us that God will punish sin. “**Nakhm**” looks much the same as the name “Noah,” which is “**Noakh**” in the Hebrew language. “Noah” means “comfort” (Genesis 5:29, NlrV). The name “Noah” and the word “sorry” show us that God will do two things: He will punish humans, and, at the same time, He will show them mercy. Yes, God is sorry He made humans. So, He will punish them with the Flood. At the same time, God promises to comfort Noah and his family. God will show them mercy. He will keep them safe in the big boat.

We already saw that the sons of Cain and the sons of Seth were different. Now God shows us that this same separation continues between Noah and the rest of humans.

NOAH GETS READY FOR THE FLOOD (Genesis 6:13–Genesis 7:10)

Read the story in Genesis 6:13–Genesis 7:10. What lesson can we learn about early human history from this surprising story?

Noah is a prophet. A prophet is a special messenger from God. Noah is a prophet the same as Daniel. Both men preach about the end of human history.

God commands Noah to build an ark or boat to keep him and his family safe from the coming Flood. The Hebrew word for “ark” or “boat” is “tevah” (Genesis 6:14). Later, Moses uses this same word to show us the basket that his mother hides him in when he is a baby (Exodus 2:3). God saves Baby Moses in this basket so that Moses can grow up and save Israel. Many Bible thinkers also compare the ark that Noah builds to another ark: the ark of the agreement (Exodus 25:10). Noah makes the ark or boat to save his family and the animals. In the same way, the ark of the agreement shows us that God will save His people (Exodus 25:22).

So, God commands Noah to get ready for the Flood by building the boat. “Noah did everything God commanded him” (Genesis 6:22, ERV). The word written as “did” is “**asah**” in the Hebrew language. The verb “did” is the answer of Noah to the command of God to “make” (Genesis 6:14–16). Moses writes this verb five times in Genesis 6:14–16. The verbs “did” and “make” show us that Noah completely obeys God. Noah does everything that God asks him to do.

“God shows Noah the plan for the ark. God tells Noah how big to build the ark and how to make every part of the ark, too. The ark is very strong. It will not sink in the Flood. No human mind is wise enough to design the ark. God comes up with the plan. Noah is the master builder.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 92, adapted.

Noah obeys God. God saves Noah because Noah has faith to do everything that God asks him (read Hebrews 11:7). Noah is an early example of faith that shows itself by obedience. This faith is the only faith that matters (James 2:20).

Why was only the family of Noah saved from the Flood? For the answer, read 2 Peter 2:5–9. Why must we warn people that we live in the time when God will judge all the people on the earth?



God commands Noah to build an ark or boat to keep him and his family safe from the coming Flood.

THE FLOOD (Genesis 7)



The actions of Noah are much the same as the actions of God when He makes the skies and the earth.

As we saw yesterday, the verb “**asah**” means to “make.” This verb shows us the actions of Noah. “**Asah**” also is an important word in the story about how God makes the skies and the earth (Genesis 1:7, 16, 25, 26, 31; Genesis 2:2). The actions of Noah are much the same as the actions of God when He makes the skies and the earth. So, what does this connection between the two stories show us? This connection shows us that the Flood is not only about punishment. The Flood also shows us how God wants to save humans.

Read Genesis 7. Why does this story about the Flood help us remember the story about how God makes the skies and the earth in six days? What lessons can we learn from the connection between these two stories?

The Flood story uses many of the same words in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. Here is a list of words that we see in both stories:

1. “Seven” (Genesis 7:2, 3, 4, 10; compare with Genesis 2:1–3).
2. “Male and female” (Genesis 7:2, 3, 9, 16; compare with Genesis 1:27).
3. “Every kind [type] of animal” (Genesis 7:14, ERV; compare with Genesis 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25).
4. “Animals,” “birds,” and “everything that crawls on the earth” (Genesis 7:8, 14, 21, 23, ERV; compare with Genesis 1:24, 25).
5. “Breath of life” (Genesis 7:15, 22, ERV; compare with Genesis 2:7).

So, these words show us that the Flood story is much the same as the Genesis 1–Genesis 2 story. The Genesis 1–Genesis 2 story helps us see that the God who makes everything is the same God who also has the power to destroy life (Deuteronomy 32:39). The list of words also is a message about hope: God will use the Flood to make everything new again on earth.

The Flood waters show us that God is reversing everything He did in Genesis 1. In Genesis 1:7, God separates the waters above the sky from the waters below the sky. In the Flood, God brings the waters back together. Then they explode and cause the Flood (Genesis 7:11).

What must we let God destroy inside our hearts before He can give us new life? For the answer, read Romans 6:1–6.

THE FLOOD ENDS (Genesis 7:22–24)

Genesis 7:22–24 shows us that the Flood “destroyed every living thing on the earth” (Genesis 7:23, ERV). We also learn that the Flood is worldwide. “The water covered the earth for 150 days” (Genesis 7:24, NLV). At this time, God “showed concern” (Genesis 8:1, NIV) for Noah, and “remembered him” (Genesis 8:1, ERV). These words are written in the middle of the story about the Flood. So, we see that this idea is the most important part of the story.

What does it mean that God “remembered” Noah (Genesis 8:1)?

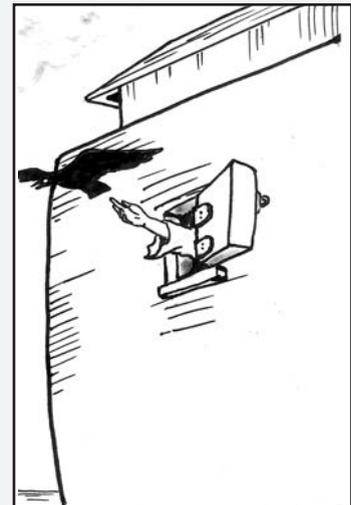
The word written as “remember” in Genesis 8:1 comes from the Hebrew verb “**zakhar**.” “**Zakhar**” shows us that God does not forget about Noah. “**Zakhar**” means more than just thinking about someone or something. “**Zakhar**” shows us that God will keep His promise to save (read Genesis 19:29). In the Flood story, the words “God remembered” show us that God stops the Flood (Genesis 8:2). So, Noah can soon leave the boat (Genesis 8:16).

Before God commands Noah to leave, Noah does a test. First, Noah sends a raven and then a dove to check on the water and see how high it is on the earth. When the dove does not come back, Noah knows “that the ground was dry” (Genesis 8:13, ERV).

We can learn important lessons from the behavior of Noah. Noah waits for God to show him what to do next. At the same time, Noah sends out the birds. Faith does not mean that we cannot see if what we learned is correct.

Do you see that Noah does not leave the boat until God tells him to do so (Genesis 8:15–19)? Noah knows that it is safe to leave. But Noah waits for permission from God before he steps out of the boat. “Noah entered the boat at the command of the Lord. Now, Noah waited for special permission from God to leave the boat. . . . Finally, an angel came from heaven. The angel opened the big, heavy door. Then the angel told Noah and his family to leave the boat and take with them every living thing.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 105, adapted.

What do the words “God remembers” mean? For the answer, read Genesis 8:1; Genesis 19:29; and Psalm 106:4. How has God shown you that He “remembers” you?



Noah sends a raven and then a dove to check on the water and see how high it is on the earth.

THE AGREEMENT: PART 1 (Genesis 8:20)

Now the time comes for God to keep His promise. Before the Flood, God told Noah, “ ‘I will make a special agreement with you. You, your wife, your sons, and their wives will all go into the boat’ ” (Genesis 6:18, ERV). This promise is completely different from the announcement of God in Genesis 6:17. In Genesis 6:17, God announces that He will destroy life. But in Genesis 6:18, God promises Noah that He will save him.

What does Noah do first when he steps out of the boat? Why does Noah do this thing before he does anything else? For the answers, read Genesis 8:20.



Noah worships God when he steps out of the boat.

After God makes Adam and Eve and everything else, the couple worship God on the Sabbath. In the same way, Noah worships God when he steps out of the boat. But Noah does not worship God in the same way that Adam and Eve do. Adam and Eve worship God face-to-face. But Noah must kill an animal and offer it to a God he cannot see. For the first time in the Bible, we read about an altar. Noah gives God a burnt offering, or “**olah**,” in the Hebrew language. This offering shows us that Noah is thankful to God, who saved him from the Flood (compare with Numbers 15:1–11).

How did the Flood change what humans ate? What important rules does God give humans about food? For the answer, read Genesis 9:2–4.

After the Flood, plant food was destroyed. So, God allowed humans to eat animals. In the Garden of Eden, humans and animals ate the same plant food. They did not try to kill each other for food. After the Flood, humans started to hunt and eat animals. So, animals started to fear humans (Genesis 9:2).

God gave humans two food rules after the Flood. First, humans must eat only clean animals (read Genesis 8:19, 20; compare with Genesis 1:21, 24). The second rule was a new rule. Humans must not eat any animal blood (Genesis 9:4).

THE AGREEMENT: PART 2 (Genesis 8:21–Genesis 9:1)

God promises to “ ‘never again destroy every living thing on the earth’ ” (Genesis 8:21, ERV). What does this promise show us about God? God also blesses Noah (Genesis 9:1). How does this blessing show us that God will keep His promise? For the answers, read Genesis 8:21–Genesis 9:1.

The promise of God shows us His loving-favor and mercy. God promises, “ ‘As long as the earth continues, there will always be a time for planting and a time for harvest’ ” (Genesis 8:22, ERV). God does not make this promise because of anything good in humans. God knows that people are evil (Genesis 8:21).

Genesis 9:8–17 shows us the blessing from God. This blessing helps us remember when God blessed everything He made and then blessed the Sabbath, too (Genesis 1:22, 28; Genesis 2:3). This connection between the Sabbath and the rainbow in Genesis 9 helps us see an important Bible truth. The Lord gives humans a second chance to start over after the Flood.

What does the rainbow show us? For the answer, read Genesis 9:8–17. How does this “proof of the agreement” (Genesis 9:13, ERV) show us the Sabbath?

Do you see the words “ ‘make My agreement’ ” and “ ‘the agreement I have made’ ” (NLV) in Genesis 9:9, 11, 17? These words show us that God keeps the promise He made to Noah in Genesis 6:18. We also see the word “agreement” (NLV) is written seven times in Genesis 9:8–17. That number, of course, helps us remember the seventh-day Sabbath. Both the rainbow and the Sabbath are proof of the agreement (Genesis 9:13, 14, 16; compare with Exodus 31:12–17). Also, both the Sabbath and the promise of the rainbow are for everyone on the earth. The Sabbath invites everyone to worship the God who made them. In the same way, the rainbow is for everyone everywhere, too. The rainbow is a promise that God will not destroy the earth with a worldwide flood again.

Next time you see a rainbow, think about all of the promises that God gives us. Why can we trust these promises? How does the rainbow show us that we can trust God to keep His promises, for sure?



The rainbow is a promise that God will not destroy the earth with a worldwide flood again.



“Marriage was one of the first gifts that God gave to humans. The gift of marriage was very beautiful.”

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Compare the people who lived before the Flood to the people in our time. When we compare these two groups, we can learn many important lessons.

“The people who lived before the Flood did much evil. God was forced to punish their sins. These same sins are happening in our own day. Humans no longer respect or honor God in their hearts. Men hate the law of God or do not care about it at all. The people who lived before the Flood cared only about the things on this earth. The people who are alive today are no different. . . . God did not judge the people who lived in the time before the Flood because they ate and drank. . . . God judged these people because they were not thankful for everything that He gave them. The people also did whatever they wanted to do. By this evil behavior, they ruined their own minds and hearts. They ruined the gifts God gave them. Marriage was one of the first gifts that God gave to humans. The gift of marriage was very beautiful. But the people who lived before the Flood did not respect marriage as they should. They got married for all the wrong reasons. Sex became the most important reason for marriage. Today, we see many of these same sins in our own time. People take the good gifts of God and put them to a wrong use. . . . People today lie, cheat, and steal. Both the rich and the poor are guilty of these crimes. The news today is filled with reports of killings. . . . Everywhere we see that people fight against their own governments. These fights fill everyone on the earth with fear. The fights show that people on the earth have no self-control. These people are filled with anger. They hate the laws of their lands. Soon their anger will fill the whole earth and make people very sad and afraid. The Bible gives us a picture of the people who lived before the Flood to show us our modern times. We are becoming the same as the people who lived before the Flood. Even now in Christian lands, people do awful crimes. These crimes are as evil as the crimes that caused God to destroy the sinners who lived before the Flood.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 101, 102, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How are the people in our time the same as the people who lived before the Flood? How does your answer help you to understand the mercy of God? Do you understand how much God really wants to save you?
- ② Some people say there was no worldwide Flood. Why is this idea wrong?